On The Shooting Of Robert Kennedy, P. 2

How Many More Must Die In The Months or Years Before That "Satisfactory Solution"?

"He (Humphrey) told the students that the United States ought to have the patience to stay at the conference table in Paris for months, and if necessary for years, until a satisfactory solution was reached."

—Vice President Humphrey at St. Paul, New York Times *May 28*

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Playing for Time to Continue the War

A high (and hawkish) Pentagon official told a friend of mine recently, "The purpose of the partial bombing pause and the talks in Paris is to reduce the fighting to a level the American people will tolerate for a long time without giving up our basic aim," i.e. an "independent" South Vietnam. This remark I believe is the best key to the confused and tangled talks in Paris. A similar clue may be found in Max Frankel's dispatch from Austin in the *New York Times* June 2. "It was primarily," he wrote, "to buy time at home to keep waging the war's military and diplomatic battles abroad that Johnson accepted the dovish counsel of at least a partial halt in the bombing on March 31 and threw in his retirement for good measure." Frankel added, "So far the tactic has worked better than he dared to hope. The bitter controversy has abated and the political candidates have been muted." The purpose is to defuse the peace issue during the election campaign, to tread water until after it is over.

The New Asia of The Same Old Crooks

I thought at one time that Johnson would make peace as the best way to undercut Bobby Kennedy, whom he hates, and elect Humphrey or perhaps even run for reelection himself as the man who made peace. But I think I underestimated Johnson's craftiness. His strategy is to undercut McCarthy and Kennedy by *appearing* to seek peace. This political strategy fits his immediate and urgent economic needs. The U.S. cannot escalate the war, adding another 200,000 men to those already in Vietnam, without imposing the kind of wartime taxes and economic controls which would be dangerously unpopular in an election year. *The campaign dictated a pause.* But there is no sign that Johnson has given up his ultimate aims nor changed his deep emotional attachment to this imperialist crusade in Southeast Asia. He was speaking from the heart when at the Korean Consulate in Honolulu April 17 he forecast a continued American protectorate over "the New Asia"—what a euphemism for Chiang Kai-shek and the corrupt oligarchies under our wing! "I deeply believe," Johnson said, "that my successor—whoever he may be—will act in ways that will reflect America's abiding interest in Asia's freedom and in Asia's security." This will certainly prove true if his successor is Humphrey or Nixon, Rockefeller or Reagan.

Much that may seem puzzling falls into place if the peace talks and the limited bombing pause are viewed as a tactic for a breathing spell. There is, for example, beginning to percolate through Washington bits and pieces of off-the-record talks which preceded the Paris conference. The U.S. negotiators seem to have done very little thinking or planning for any kind of a compromise political settlement. The U.S.

(Continued on Page Four)

Why Reward A Flop of A General?

When Westmoreland was appointed head of U.S. forces in Vietnam April 25, 1964, we had 16,000 soldiers there. Now we have 545,000 and are no closer to victory. He was touted, on appointment, as "a specialist in guerrilla warfare", a claim even his press agents soon abandoned. His principal achievement, like that of his predecessor, Harkins, was a series of optimistic statements, all proven silly. Westmoreland's first, after six months in charge: "It is absolutely inconceivable to me that the Viet Cong could ever militarily defeat the armed forces of South Vietnam." Less than six months later we were pouring combat troops in and Americanizing the war to save those forces from collapse. Every few months Westmoreland has announced that the enemy was on his last legs, out of steam, and ready to give in if only Westmoreland got more troops. In four years Westmoreland's troops were increased by 3400 percent—no less —and the enemy is still tottering. At the LBJ ranch May 31, Westmoreland assured the country that the enemy was "approaching a point of desperation" and his forces "deteriorating in quality." Commenting on this and similar weekly whiffs of marijuana from the U.S. Mission in Saigon, Bernard Weinraub cabled (New York Times June 2), "American soldiers in the field would only grin at such reports. For the North Vietnamese soldiers around Dakto, Pleiku, Dongha, Hue and Hoian have proved to be tough—sometimes brutal—soldiers who appear in many cases to be as well-fed and well-dressed and well-equipped as the allied soldiers." Any business executive who had failed as miserably and talked as much nonsense (see document on p. 3) as Westmoreland would have been fired long ago. Like Harkins his alibi is that the U.S. press "impeded" the war. (Donald Kirk from Saigon, Washington Star May 27). If only he had had censorship . . . The reward for all this cheerful idiocy, which has cost so many lives, is his promotion to Army Chief of Staff. This requires confirmation by the Senate. Every effort was being made to rush the appointment through. McCarthy, Kennedy and pro-peace Senators ought to force a debate in the Senate and spotlight the succession of military hot air artists to whom our sons are entrusted.

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It's Only Unorganized Violence That Still Shocks Us

THE TERRIBLE NEWS AT PRESS TIME: Our heart goes out in sympathy to Mrs. Kennedy and the children and our prayers for Robert Kennedy's recovery. The air is full of the banalities such tragedy evokes. We would not add to them. But amid the shock over this one act of unorganized and insane violence, we wish more people would stop a moment and think how conditioned we are to take organized violence for granted. We are still human enough to be shocked at one man's shooting. But preparations to kill millions are part of our way of life, not only here in America but everywhere else in the world. We spend $80 billion a year to kill, maim, poison, burn and asphyxiate other human beings at will; we train our healthiest youth for murder and enlist our best scientists to devise new means of killing. Giant corporations draw profit from the organization of means for slaughter. We live in a huge human abattoir but our nostrils are so conditioned to the stink that we no longer notice it. That man who just fell into a ditch in South Vietnam with his guts torn out by a bullet from an American helicopter also had children, perhaps ambitions, certainly some spark of that wonder we call a soul.

WE WISH THERE WERE SOME WAY to spread a rumor that the poor exude strontium 90, or that their effluvia was turning up in hair tonic and causing baldness, so we could get a strong middle class response to the Poor People's March. Hypchondria seems to be the one way to arouse the middle classes, from the days when Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* about the meat packing industry made them fear germs in hot dogs to SANE's campaign against nuclear testing, which alarmed mothers about baby's milk. We endorse Bayard Rustin's call for support of the June 19 march in solidarity with the poor. His seems to be an effort to arrange with friendly officials to give the Poor People's Mobilization enough of a victory on some urgent issues to send them home satisfied and encouraged to organize for further pressure. But even this needs more support from the suburbs than is yet in evidence.

THOUGH IT HAS ALL THE EARMARKS OF A DIRTY campaign leak from the White House to Drew Pearson, the latter's charge that Kennedy as Attorney General had allowed the FBI to tap Dr. Martin Luther King's telephone deserves serious investigation, perhaps by the Senate's Constitutional Rights subcommittee. J. Edgar Hoover hated Dr. King and slandered him in his lifetime. On the excuse of "national security" ever since the beginning of World War II, the FBI and other intelligence agencies have wiretapped many respectable liberals. It would be no surprise at all if Dr. King was among them. The revelation is made particularly timely by the wiretap provisions of the pending crime bill. Long of Missouri told the Senate May 22 it was embarrassing that the U.S. was preparing to authorize more wiretapping just when Czechoslavakia had banned both wiretaps and bugging.

WHILE TITO PRAISED THE CZECHS, the liberties allowed in Prague are still forbidden in Belgrade. We were happy to see students riots hit Tito's capital. This is a good moment to call public attention to the fact that Mihailo Mihailov whose book Russian Themes has just been published here by Farrar, Straus and Giroux is still in prison, most of the time in solitary confinement, for the crime of telling the truth about the Soviet Union.

ON A MEET THE (SLEEPY) PRESS show June 2, Dr. Grayson Kirk of Columbia admitted "strong moral convictions" about the war in Vietnam were the major factor in student unrest but nobody asked him about the Institute for Defense Analysis contract, a hateful symbol of growing military influence in the academic world. Nor was there any question about the gymnasium, the other specific issue raised by Columbia's students. Dr. Kirk's smugness about the police provoked no questions even about the beatings of bystanders and medical corpsman.

Is Orwell Alive and Writing LBJ's Speeches?

"Freedom has not retreated an inch or foot of soil that freedom held in 1963. Freedom holds in 1968."

—L.B.J. speech to the I.L.G.W.U., May 25.

"Generally, I found, the Greeks hold three opinions about the relationship of the United States with their country. First, the United States had quite a bit to do with the coup. Second, the United States finds the junta acceptable. Third, if the United States wanted to change the Government, its influence is sufficient to do so . . .

"Greece is a full-blown police state . . ."

—Rep. Donald Fraser (D.-Minn.), *May 27, upon his return from Athens. (Con. Rec. E4666 May 27).*

Mississippi's Poor Give Eastland and Long A Rousing Welcome to the Welfare Rolls

"There are two kinds of welfare for the poor: Aid to Disabled Persons (to get this you have to be blind or half-dead) and Aid to Dependent Children (this is what all those Christians cry about: Last week Senator Russell Long said about the poor peoples march on Washington that he 'wasn't going to give any more money to those worthless people to be more worthless.' Honorable Russell Long on welfare. How much a month is incalculable. His family is the chief stockholder in the Win-or-Lose Oil Company. He's worth a cool million. He gets a 27.5% tax credit. It comes out of mine and my co-workers pockets. It is welfare.) Aid to Dependent Children amounts to $9 per child per month. The most you can get is $90 a month. If you have over 10 children, tough shit. The only people who can get this are women whose men have left them. It is impossible for an able-bodied man or childless able-bodied woman to get welfare. This applies to the poor only. Honorable Jim Eastland is on welfare. He gets $10,750* a month. Honorable Russell Long is on welfare. He gets only the bankers know how much a month. My sister's child is on welfare. It gets $9 a month."

—Mississippi Newsletter, *May 24 (Box 120, Tougaloo, Miss. 39174, sub $3 a year). This is one of the best grassroots publications to come across our desk and readers may wish to help it by subscribing.*

* That was for 1966. Last year, according to the May 23 *Congressional Record* (S 6180) Eastland Plantation, Inc." of Doddsville, Miss. (Sen. Eastland's hometown) received a subsidy of $157,930, or $13,161 a month, about what 1,462 ADC children get in Mississippi.

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Grim Picture of the War's Setbacks in A Secret Senate Foreign Relations Report

We print here the text of a confidential Senate Foreign Relations Committee report based on classified Defense Department statistics. This gives a very different view of the war in Vietnam from that advanced by Gen. Westmoreland May 30 at the LBJ Ranch (the Westmoreland text is in the June 3 issue of the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents). *The Foreign Relations report was prepared by Carl Marcy, the Committee's Chief of Staff. It was leaked to the Associated Press but the only paper in which we saw its story printed was the* Washington Post *May 26. The figures on which the report is based are classified so its summary of them could be presented only in percentages. It is impossible to reconcile the overall picture thus disclosed with Westmoreland's claim that the enemy's "only victories of the last few years have been in the propaganda field." The figures on South Vietnamese Army desertions—up 30% over the last year—hardly support the General's assertion that "the Vietnamese armed forces are becoming progressively stronger." Westmoreland said, "I am confident that the enemy is receiving false reports from his field commanders." If Hanoi's Generals are like ours, we're sure Westmoreland is right. The report follows:*

"As noted in my memorandum of November 29, 1967 to all members of the Committee, the staff has received every month from the Department of Defense classified statistical information on Vietnam. The staff has summarized the most recent classified figures for March, submitted by the Defense Department earlier this month, and has reached the following general conclusions. The figures to support these conclusions are not given because of their classified nature.

"1. The percentage of population secured, according to reports of the Government of South Vietnam, was lower in March 1968 than at any time in 1968 or 1967.

"2. The percentage of hamlets secured, again according to reports of the Government of South Vietnam, was lower in March than at any time in the past two years.

"3. According to the Hamlet Evaluation System, administered by the United States Mission in Saigon, the percentage of population in Category A, B and C hamlets—the three most secure categories—was lower in February and March 1968 than at any time in 1967. The percentage of population in Viet Cong controlled hamlets was higher in March 1968 than at any time since June 1967.

"4. Again, according to the Hamlet Evaluation System, the percentage of hamlets in Categories A, B and C was lower in February and March 1968 than any time in the past two years. The percentage of hamlets controlled by the Viet Cong was the highest since July 1967.

"5. The infiltration rate was higher in March 1968 than at any time in the past.

"6. The number of enemy political and military defectors under the "Open Arms" program was lower in March 1968 than at any time in the past (and was about a quarter of the monthly average in 1967).

"7. The number of South Vietnamese Army desertions was higher in February 1968 (figures have not been made available for March 1968) than at any time in 1968 or 1967, and the number was about 30% higher than the monthly average in 1967.

"8. Although U.S. and South Vietnamese deaths in action were almost equal in March 1968, U.S. losses continued to be higher proportionately because of the fact that the combined strength of the South Vietnamese Army, Marine Corps, Regional Forces and Popular Forces—that is, South Vietnamese strength on the ground—was about 50% higher than the combined strength of the U.S. Army and Marine Corps strength—that is, U.S. strength on the ground. United States deaths in action in March were about twice the monthly average in 1967 and almost four times the monthly average in 1966. South Vietnamese deaths in action in March were 50% higher than the monthly average in 1967. Enemy deaths in action in March were two and a half times as high as the monthly average in 1967.

That Daring Young Herman Kahn On the Pentagon's Flying Trapeze

"By the way, the South Vietnamese Army even today is the best Army in Southeast Asia, except the North Vietnamese."

"I would say that, outside of the Philippines, the South Vietnamese Government is the most democratic in Southeast Asia."

"I tend to think we could cut back the total U.S. manpower in Vietnam. I wouldn't cut back right away, but at some point I would cut back if only for political purposes. As soon as we were clearly doing well, I would make this even more credible by saying 'We're winning the war, so we're pulling out 50,000 troops.' They might not be fighting troops, you understand, but largely clerk-typists, logistics, and such."

—Herman Kahn, back from Vietnam, where he went on a Pentagon contract, in *U.S. News & World Report* June 3, where he says we're doing everything wrong but could, if we reform, win the war in two to four years, and concludes—no doubt to the satisfaction of the contractor—with a plea that we stick it out.

Secret Directive to U.S. Commanders Calls for Vietnam Victory in Three Months

SAIGON—A secret directive has gone out to all U.S. field commanders in South Vietnam telling them to win the war within the next three months . . . to break the current military stalemate and give the Americans a decisive voice at the Paris peace conference. The Communists are clearly seeking a similar military breakthrough for the same reason. Thus, it seems certain that, far from reducing the violence level, the Paris talks will produce some of the bloodiest fighting of the war in the weeks and months ahead . . .

The directive was believed to have been issued May 6. It went out under the name of Gen. William C. Westmoreland, outgoing commander of U. S. forces in Vietnam. But it originated with Gen. Creighton W. Abrams, Westmoreland's successor . . . With Abrams in the driver's seat, U.S. military men predicted a more aggressive war. While there will be no change in basic strategy, these sources said, U.S. tactics will reflect Abrams' aggressive personality. The secret directive has already done that. . . . "They want us to go in there with bells ringing and lights flashing," one officer said after reading the directive.

To lose contact with the enemy once it has been established will be considered a tactical defeat, the directive said. One officer said the directive closed with the stern admonition that: "You will hound and harass the enemy until his influence is driven from the land."

—*Keyes Beech,* Chicago Daily News, *May 25.*

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Vietnam War Costs Have Just Risen More Than The $6 Billion Economy Cut

(Continued from Page One)

is ready for mutual de-escalation, but mutual de-escalation in the absence of a political settlement merely means that the other side give up the revolt and the war and leave the military junta in power in Saigon. This seems to be the shape of that "satisfactory solution" for which, as Humphrey told students at St. Paul May 27, we should be willing to stay at the conference table "for months and if necessary for years." This is what Senator McCarthy sensed in his interview with Frank McGee of NBC June 2, when he said the government wasn't saying or doing anything different from what it had been saying or doing "before the negotiations supposedly began"—

We're still saying no coalition government—Dean Rusk is—no recognition of the National Liberation Front, accelerate the war, call up more troops. There is no pull-back, there is no limitation on the search and destroy missions.

There is no change because no real change has taken place.

Still Looking for Military Victory

Jeremy Campbell from Washington in the London *Evening Standard* May 8 and Stuart H. Loory from Washington in the *Los Angeles Times* May 31 both reported that Johnson's March 31 "abdication" address was preceded two weeks earlier by a dramatic reversal of opinion on the part of Johnson's non-official advisers on the war. A panel which includes retired Generals Bradley, Taylor and Ridgway, Douglas Dillon, McGeorge Bundy and George Ball, had always before been for vigorous prosecution of the war, the only dissenter being Ball. After their meeting March 18—so goes this story—they startled the President by reporting that continued escalation, intensified bombing and increased American troop strength "would", so Loory writes, "do no good." But there is no indication that these somber military conclusions had any firm political impact. Far from preparing the public mind for compromise, the Administration has shut the door firmly on talk of a coalition. Westmoreland was allowed to use the forum of a Presidential press conference at the LBJ ranch May 30 for another of those silly performances that build up the illusion that a military victory is possible. And now we learn that on May 6 a secret directive was issued by Westmoreland to U.S. commanders in Vietnam calling for "a major breakthrough to a military victory" (see box on page 3). You don't waste more lives if you're really serious about peace.

The Meditations of Pandit Nixon

"Miami, June 2 (UPI)—Former Vice President Nixon relaxed in an ocean-front villa today counting his Dixie support and deciding whether a Mod-fashion Nehru jacket might help his appeal to youth in the Republican presidential race."

—Washington Post, *June 3*.

If that doesn't work, why not spread a rumor that he freaks out on LSD?

With the mounting frustration of the Poor Peoples encampment, we walk here on eggs. The Congress is exacting a $6 billion cutback in expenditure which will come in substantial part out of welfare. At such a time, hardly noticed by the country, Johnson has pushed up expenditures on the war by more than the whole $6 billion cutback. On Feb. 12, in a so-called "zero supplemental" the President boasted that McNamara had cut $6 billion out of other military items to provide additional funds for the war. A month and a half later, in his "abdication" speech, Johnson said he would need a supplemental appropriation of $2.5 billion more this fiscal year for Vietnam. This figure has had to be revised upward. On May 31, with only 40 days left of this fiscal year, he sent the House a message asking $3.9 billion instead of $2.5 billion. This will make a total of from $6.5 to $9.9 billion extra available—the estimates differ—for Vietnam. We add fuel to the fires of war even as we pare down the poor.

This was written before the California returns were in. It illustrates the urgent necessity that McCarthy and Kennedy, no matter who wins, join forces if the American people are to have a choice. Otherwise the two-party system will become a one-party rubber stamp for Johnson's con game and Johnson's war.

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